DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 174 208 IR 007 482

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TITLE Interlibrary Loan and Post-Secondary Libraries in British Columbia. Report of a Project, September 1977-April 1978.
INSTITUTION British Columbia Dept. of Education, Richmond. Office for Library Coordination.
PUB DATE 78
NOTE 39p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Libraries; Efficiency; *Interlibrary Loans; Library Cooperation; *Library Networks; Library Research

ABSTRACT

This report of a project conducted to improve the sharing of library resources in the post-secondary sector in British Columbia focuses on the operations of the Interlibrary Loan Network, which went into operation September 1, 1977. This network was designed to provide access to the library collections at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and the University of Victoria, for faculty and students at all provincially supported post-secondary institutions in B.C. Analysis of data for the academic year 1977-78 showed that the university libraries supplied 12,744 items, with a success request rate of 70.8 percent. About 80 percent of these successful requests were filled within seven calendar days or less; the main factors affecting turnaround time were delays in communication and geographical location. Lower unit costs were achieved when the volume of transactions increased during peak months. Two other complementary projects which are noted were designed to create and distribute computer-output- microform catalogs of the holdings of the university libraries, and to create a union catalog of the holdings of all post-secondary libraries. A discussion of some of the broader aspects of access to libraries and proposals for further improving that access conclude the report. (Author/CMV)

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INTERLIBRARY LOAN AND POST-SECONDARY LIBRARIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Report of a Project,
September 1977 - April 1978

by
Basil Stuart-Stubbs

Office for Library Coordination
British Columbia Ministry of Education
Richmond, B.C.
1978

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I. Post-Secondary Institutions in B.C. and Their Libraries

In British Columbia post-secondary education in 1977/78 was provided through three universities, fourteen colleges and one technical institute, a total of eighteen institutions, several of which operated branch campuses.

Table 1

Name	1977/78 Full-Time & Part-Time Enrolment*	Location of Main Campus
University of British Columbia	25,473	Vancouver
University of Victoria	7,408	Victoria
Simon Fraser University	10,860	Burnaby
Camosun College	2,546	Victoria
Capilano College	2,982	North Vancouver
Cariboo College	1,834	Kamloops
Douglas College	5,167	New Westminster
East Kootenay College	438	Cranbrook
Fraser Valley College	1,329	Abbotsford
Malaspina College	2,106	Nanaimo
College of New Caledonia	1,101	Prince George
Northern Lights College	249	Dawson Creek
North Island College	1,086	Comox
Northwest College	510	Terrace
Okanagan College	2,123	Kelowna
Selkirk College	1,022	Castlegar
Vancouver Community College	5,967	Vancouver
B.C. Institute of Technology	11,787	Burnaby
TOTAL	83,988	

The following table indicates the size of the library collections at these institutions in 1977, measured in physical volumes only, and not including

*B.C. Ministry of Education. Educational Data Services. B.C. Post-Secondary statistics, 1977-78. Enrolment Data. p.16.

such other media as recordings, maps and microforms. Figures given are to the nearest thousand. Note the concentration of resources in the urban areas of Vancouver/Burnaby and Victoria.

Table 2

University of British Columbia	2,317,000
University of Victoria	774,000
Simon Fraser University	598,000
Camosun College	27,000
Capilano College	54,000
Cariboo College	42,000
Douglas College	76,000
East Kootenay College	3,000
Fraser Valley College	15,000
Malaspina College	37,000
College of New Caledonia	35,000
Northern Lights College	4,000
North Island College	7,000
Northwest College	2,000
Okanagan College	38,000
Selkirk College	53,000
Vancouver Community College	82,000
B.C. Institute of Technology	65,000
David Thompson University Centre	60,000

II. An Interlibrary Loan Network

In a report to the B.C. Post-Secondary Coordinating Committee entitled The Needs of Libraries and Post-Secondary Education in British Columbia (April 1976), Basil Stuart-Stubbs and Ross Carter proposed the development of an interlibrary loan network linking the university and college libraries:

"Under present circumstances college libraries must rely heavily on university libraries, for two reasons: first, college collections are inadequate to meet needs; second, there is no union catalogue to tell college libraries what each other hold, which reduces the potential of inter-college borrowing. An increase in inter-college borrowing should be an objective, as should be an increase in the amount of sharing among libraries of all types and sizes, and within geographic regions. But the means to accomplish this pattern of sharing are not yet at hand."

"Initially, the university-college sharing process must be improved. To this end, it is proposed that the interlibrary loan units at the three university libraries be developed through the provision of direct subsidies by the Department of Education and the Library Development Commission. College and other libraries could ask any of the three university libraries to provide items, and expect to receive them quickly at no direct cost."

The B.C. Post-Secondary Coordinating Committee endorsed this concept, and recommended it to the Ministry of Education, which invited a formal proposal. This was submitted in January 1977; it restated the recommendation in expanded form, and defined the objectives for an interlibrary loan project:

Summary of Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education provide a project grant to the University of British Columbia for the management and operation of a two-year experimental interlibrary loan service for faculty and students at publicly supported post-secondary institutions in B.C.
2. It is further recommended that the above service:
   (a) include access to library collections at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria, with the costs of service provided at each of the three university libraries to be met through disbursal of project funds;
   (b) operate within the overall quotas and funding established in this proposal, with individual quotas set for each participating library;
   (c) be reviewed quarterly by a Users' Committee representing the participating libraries and the Ministry of Education;
   (d) be based as much as possible on COM catalogues and other published records of the university library holdings.

Principal Objectives:

1. Provide access by interlibrary loan to library collections at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and the University of Victoria for faculty and students at all provincially supported post-secondary institutions in B.C.
2. Gather data to permit rationalization of existing service patterns so that future interlibrary loan service can be effective, responsive, and economical.
3. Collect information concerning materials requested by, and lent to, post-secondary institutions as a basis for determining the nature and extent of some of the collection needs at colleges and universities in B.C.
4. Achieve through data analyses a better understanding of the appropriate balance between collections development and interlibrary loan service in meeting future needs of post-secondary educational institutions in B.C.
5. Develop a proposal with recommendations for continued funding of post-secondary interlibrary loan services through a regular budgeting procedure.

The Ministry responded by providing grants for three major projects. The first of these had as its objective the creation and distribution of computer-output-microform catalogues of the holdings of the three university libraries. The second, a logical development from the first, had as its objective the creation of a true union catalogue of the holdings of all post-secondary libraries. The third project aimed at the setting up of an efficient interlibrary loan network.

The computer-output-microform (COM) catalogues were derived from available machine-readable records. In each instance these records left much to be desired from a bibliographic point of view. However, it was possible to use them for a first rough listing of university library holdings. The U.B.C. file was not complete, being based on history tapes from an acquisitions system which had been in operation only since 1967. It was not possible

to obtain a title listing from the S.F.U. file. The U.V. fiche contained filing errors which programming failed to overcome. Despite such shortcomings, the catalogue did serve to disseminate hitherto unavailable information directly to the participating university and college libraries, all of which were given in addition COM fiche readers and related equipment for viewing and storing microfiche.

An efficient means of communication between the borrowing libraries and the lending libraries was needed, and conventional telex recommended itself. Many libraries already had telex machines. Those which did not were encouraged by the Ministry to install them; by the time the project was in operation, all but two institutions had telex equipment.

Working routines for the operation of the network were devised and spelled out in an Interlibrary Loan Project Manual, prepared by Margaret Friesen and Basil Stuart-Stubbs. Standardized formats and codes for the sending of messages were established, and these contributed to a lowering of operating costs. Two worksheets were designed to simplify the recording of statistics.

The use of a province-wide courier system was explored, but found to be impractical, given the anticipated volume of traffic. However, it was possible to arrange for courier delivery to some institutions in the lower Mainland area. A truck operated by Simon Fraser University also serviced the B.C. Institute of Technology, running between those two institutions and U.B.C.* Initially Capilano, Douglas, Fraser Valley and Vancouver Community Colleges sent individual messengers to the offices of the Greater Vancouver Library Federation. G.V.L.F. had volunteered to serve as a drop for shipments to and from U.B.C., those shipments to be shuttled to the drop by the G.V.L.F. truck, since it made daily trips to U.B.C. on behalf of the Federated Information Network (FIN), a G.V.L.F. service which links the Lower Mainland public libraries to each other and to U.B.C. Later, VCC sent its own truck to UBC daily for pickup and delivery, and Douglas sent its truck three times a week. Undoubtedly a more efficient and less costly system could have been devised, but the institutional barriers proved too great to overcome.

The Interlibrary Loan Network went into operation on September 1st, 1977. Although the Network continues to operate, this report deals only with the period from September 1, 1977 to April 30, 1978; this period encompasses the main part of the academic year for all participating institutions.

*As part of a separate arrangement with Okanagan College, under the name of SHARE, S.F.U. used a commercial courier to deliver materials to Kelowna overnight.

III. Transactions

Listed below are the libraries which participated in the project, with their code letters. These code letters are used in the statistical tables which follow. When a library is represented by two letters, the figures represent the total of all branch campuses; for example, in a table DG would represent the combination of DGC, DGN, DGR and DGS. The total number of items received by each institution for the period September 1977 to August 1978 is given in the third column.

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA Main	BCM	889
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA Woodward	BCW	
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY	SF	3141
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA	VI	1763
DAVID THOMPSON UNIVERSITY CENTRE	DT	53
B.C. INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	BT	1056
CAMOSUN COLLEGE	CM	365
CAPILANO COLLEGE	CP	562
CARIBOO COLLEGE	CR	904
DOUGLAS COLLEGE Coquitlam	DGC	1623
DOUGLAS COLLEGE New Westminster	DGN	
DOUGLAS COLLEGE Richmond	DGR	
DOUGLAS COLLEGE Surrey	DGS	
EAST KOOTENAY COLLEGE	EK	513
FRASER VALLEY COLLEGE	FV	597
MALASPINA COLLEGE Nanaimo	MLN	655
MALASPINA COLLEGE Powell River	MLP	
COLLEGE OF NEW CALEDONIA	NC	493
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE Alert Bay	NIA	73
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE Campbell River	NIC	
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE Courtenay	NIO	
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE Gold River	NIG	
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE Port Alberni	NIP	
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE Port Hardy	NIH	
NORTH ISLAND COLLEGE Zeballos	NIZ	

NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE Cassiar	NLA	
NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE Chetwynd	NLC	
NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE Dawson Creek	NLD	779
NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE Fort Nelson	NLN	
NORTHERN LIGHTS COLLEGE Fort St. John	NLS	
NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE Kitimat	NWK	
NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE Nishga	NWN	
NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE Prince Rupert	NWP	
NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE Queen Charlottes	NWQ	435
NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE Smithers	NWS	
NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE Terrace	NWT	
NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE Upper Skeena	NWU	
OKANAGAN COLLEGE Kelowna	OKK	
OKANAGAN COLLEGE Osoyoos	OKO	
OKANAGAN COLLEGE Penticton	OKP	
OKANAGAN COLLEGE Revelstoke	OKR	
OKANAGAN COLLEGE Salmon Arm	OKS	651*
OKANAGAN COLLEGE Summerland	OKU	
OKANAGAN COLLEGE Vernon	OKV	
PACIFIC VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE Maple Ridge	PVM	
SELKIRK COLLEGE	SL	724
VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE King Edward	VCK	
VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE Langara	VCL	1648
VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE Vocational Inst.	VCV	

Between September 1, 1977 and April 30, 1978, the network processed the following number of transactions:

Table 3

	Complete	Incomplete	Total	Success Rate
BC	9,185	3,383	12,568	73.1%
SF	1,678	1,003	2,681	62.6%
VI	1,688	819	2,507	67.3%
DT	144	45	189	76.2%
Other	49	9	58	84.5%
TOTALS	12,744	5,259	18,003	70.8%

*Excludes SHARE, which supplied 449 items to OK from September 1977 to April 1978.

DT (David Thompson University Centre), the former Notre Dame University Library, supplied some items to Selkirk College. "Other" accounts for some items supplied between colleges, and reported to the project.

This table raises a number of questions:

- Why did BC receive 69.8% of the requests and fill 72.1% of them?
- Why was the success rate higher at BC than at the other two universities?
- What factors affected the success rate?

Subsequent tables may suggest answers to some of these questions.

The next table examines the monthly fluctuation in success rates among the leading libraries.

Table 4

	BC	SF	VI	DT
September	82.4%	80.0%	74.2%	100%
October	73%	52%	64%	57.1%
November	73%	61%	61%	66%
December	66%	63%	74%	-
January	75%	62%	74%	85%
February	71%	72%	68%	74%
March	74%	69%	70%	76%
April	77%	63.5%	64%	100%

The highest success rates were achieved by all institutions in the first month, perhaps because there were fewer transactions, and because the collections were not then in heavy use by local students. A decline in the success rates in October and November could have been expected. But if use of collections by local students was a factor, success rates should have been much higher in December, whereas this was true only in the case of VI. Moreover, they should have improved again in April, which they did at BC, but not at SF or VI. There is a striking and inexplicable lack of correlation between

the success rates of the lending libraries.

The reasons why items could not be supplied is shown on the next table. The percentages are vertical.

Table 5

	BC	SF	VI	DT
Item missing	19.7%	29.0%	12.2%	2.2%
Item not owned	20.0%	24.9%	17.9%	62.2%
Lack part or vol.	11.6%	2.5%	15.3%	24.4%
In use	22.2%	33.5%	39.1%	0.0%
Non-circulating	13.1%	1.4%	8.7%	6.7%
Bindery	6.4%	3.2%	1.0%	0.0%
Unable to identify citation	6.4%	2.2%	3.8%	2.2%
Other	0.7%	3.2%	2.0%	2.2%

That items were in use, or missing (a form of use?) were the reasons libraries most frequently gave for being unable to supply an item.

Another reason frequently given was that a requested item was not owned. In the case of B.C., the 20% figure is understandable, because the COM catalogue did not represent the entire collection, and libraries were invited to send in "blind" requests, on the off-chance that a wanted item was held by BC. The COM catalogue for VI was late in being issued, which may explain the high percentage. The COM catalogue for SF was available in an author-only file; and bibliographical descriptions were short; this may have resulted in some misinterpretations of information on the part of the borrowing libraries. In addition, colleges forwarded requests unfilled by one university library to another, as a second attempt, even though the desired items were not listed in in the COM catalogues of those universities.

The next table shows the monthly fluctuations in reasons given for not supplying items, for BC.

Table 6

	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A
Item missing	13.3%	20.5%	24.9%	17.9%	13.9%	18.3%	23.1%	16.5%
Item not owned	28.9%	22.0%	19.4%	11.0%	22.7%	20.0%	20.0%	21.6%
Lack part or vol.	21.1%	17.0%	10.9%	13.2%	13.9%	8.9%	9.0%	6.8%
In use	2.2%	13.0%	18.5%	25.1%	16.6%	27.3%	29.3%	28.0%
Non-circulating	7.8%	11.6%	14.9%	10.6%	15.8%	15.1%	10.5%	14.8%
Bindery	13.3%	8.2%	5.1%	10.6%	7.5%	4.6%	4.5%	4.2%
Unable to identify citation	10.0%	6.1%	4.9%	10.0%	8.9%	5.8%	3.6%	8.1%
Other	3.3%	1.6%	1.3%	1.6%	.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The variation in the percentages given for items In Use probably reflects local use of collections. BC tends to have more material in the Bindery at any time than do SF and VI.

This table presents the same data for SF.

Table 7

	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A
Item missing	23.0%	17.9%	33.5%	43.3%	34.0%	34.3%	27.0%	22.0%
Item not owned	7.7%	59.6%	19.8%	19.4%	21.3%	11.5%	13.9%	17.4%
Lack part or vol.	7.7%	.6%	3.0%	6.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%
In use	53.8%	17.9%	37.6%	25.4%	30.9%	40.6%	48.4%	30.3%
Non-circulating	0.0%	.6%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	4.6%
Bindery	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%	3.2%	2.1%	5.7%	10.1%
Unable to identify citation	7.6%	2.6%	0.0%	1.5%	1.1%	5.2%	2.5%	3.7%
Other	.2%	.8%	2.0%	3.0%	8.5%	6.2%	0.8%	4.6%

As in the case of BC, the In Use pattern probably follows the local use pattern, although the figure for September seems unaccountably high.

This table present the same data for VI.

Table 8

	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A
Item missing	8.3%	8.9%	16.6%	26.3%	23.7%	9.7%	10.6%	8.0%
Item not owned	54.2%	46.2%	35.9%	26.3%	21.1%	7.0%	6.3%	12.4%
Lack part or vol.	12.5%	11.9%	9.0%	26.3%	13.2%	19.3%	16.3%	15.0%
In use	4.2%	22.4%	30.8%	15.8%	23.7%	40.9%	56.3%	46.0%
Non-circulating	8.3%	3.0%	2.6%	5.3%	10.5%	15.0%	6.9%	8.8%
Bindery	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.1%	0.0%	3.5%
Unable to identify citation	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	5.3%	3.8%	2.5%	4.4%
Other	12.5%	7.6%	1.3%	0.0%	1.3%	3.2%	1.2%	1.8%

The percentage for Item not owned declined after November, when the VI COM fiche was finally distributed. Again, the In use pattern indicates that the network borrowers were competing with local students for the same items.

This table indicates the reasons why lending libraries were unable to fill requests for various categories of material. Percentages are vertical.

Table 9

	Book	Periodical	Government Publication	Thesis	Microform	Other
Item missing	21.2%	19.6%	9.5%	8.3%	20.0%	7.0%
Item not owned	25.8%	12.4%	43.2%	40.3%	14.3%	45.6%
Lack part or volume	0.9%	23.8%	8.1%	2.8%	31.4%	8.8%
In use	33.0%	19.3%	10.8%	30.6%	5.7%	7.0%
Non-circulating	16.2%	1.8%	13.5%	15.3%	5.7%	24.6%
Bindery	0.9%	10.7%	2.7%	1.4%	-	3.5%
Unable to identify citation	0.7%	11.2%	6.8%	0%	20.0%	1.8%

Books were more frequently in use than periodicals, since periodicals are not loaned at SF. Periodicals, on the other hand, were more frequently in the bindery. In the case of government publications, the high percentage unavailable because they were not owned is probably attributable to the fact that the majority of these publications are not listed in the COM fiche; thus the borrowing libraries would submit "blind" requests in the hope that the lending library would have the wanted item. In addition, government publication requests were frequently not verified and the information given too incomplete to locate in UBC's collection.

Some general observations arising out of these tables:

- a discouraging number of items were unavailable because they were missing. How many of these items were in use on the premises, as opposed to being lost or stolen, it is not possible to say. Also, it is not known how many items could have been found with a prolonged search; such searches would have increased costs and turnaround times. The university libraries do have a problem, in that the time and cost involved in carrying out regular inventories are prohibitive; the question must be raised as to how accurate catalogue records are. And what success rate do local users experience when they look for material?

- a significant percentage of items were noted as being not owned, or in the case of periodical items, lacking in a part or volume. This is either a reflection of the inadequacy of the COM fiche in presenting holdings information, a weakness which has been noted; or of a failure on the part of staff at borrowing libraries to check the COM fiche thoroughly; or, incorrect information was provided because the request was unverified; or a combination of all three, which is likely.

- the high percentage of items already in use points to the need for improved collections at the college libraries; there is simply too much demand for many items to be met from a limited number of copies in the province.

The next table shows, for the university and college libraries separately, the percentage distribution of the requests among transactions, by format,

language, place and date of publication. There was only slight variation in these figures from month to month. The table therefore covers all transactions.

Table 10

	Universities	Colleges
Books	34.6%	41.5%
Periodicals	58.2%	54.2%
Government Publications	1.2%	1.0%
Theses	1.7%	0.4%
Microforms	3.3%	2.2%
Other	1.0%	0.7%
English	89.4%	96.2%
French	3.1%	0.8%
German	3.2%	0.7%
Other	2.6%	0.2%
Unknown	1.7%	2.1%
U.S.	31.4%	41.5%
U.K.	10.1%	7.5%
Canada	7.9%	10.8%
Other	12.4%	2.8%
Unknown	38.2%	37.4%
Pre 1950	18.8%	6.7%
1951-60	8.6%	6.3%
1961-65	8.7%	6.8%
1966-70	13.2%	14.6%
1971-75	27.6%	37.9%
1976-	15.6%	17.8%
Date Unknown	7.5%	9.9%

Most requests were for either books or periodicals, with the emphasis on the latter. Most of these were in the English language. Works published in the U.S. were in the most demand. Approximately half had been published since 1970, an encouraging figure, given that the college collections are in the developmental stage; many works are still in print, and may be purchased. The University libraries demonstrated a greater need for older materials. It is indicative of the state of Canadian studies at the colleges that requests should have amounted to nearly 11%, a high percentage when one considers that Canadian publications amount to a small fraction of the world's English language publications. A strengthening of Canadian collections at the colleges is needed.

Rough scanning of the actual requests suggests that the colleges should make a particular effort to develop backfiles of periodicals in high demand. This would reduce the number of interlibrary loan requests significantly, and improve service to college students and faculty. Since many of the college libraries are short of space, the purchase of backfiles in microform should be explored.

IV. Network Efficiency

Leaving aside the question of availability of desired items, network efficiency depends on a number of factors:

- The speed with which a borrowing library, upon receipt of a request for an item from an individual patron, forwards that request to a lending library.

- the method used for sending a request from a borrowing library to a lending library.

- the speed with which the lending library fills the request, by retrieving the item from its collection, creates the necessary records, produces photocopies where desirable or necessary, packages and sends the item.

- the method used to deliver the item from the lending library to the borrowing library.

An attempt has been made in the following tables to measure network efficiency in the above terms.

Table 11

Turnaround Time: Borrowing Library's Response to Patron's Request

In effect, this table is expressed as a score. Three working days were set as a standard of performance; upon receipt of a request from a library patron, a borrowing library attempted to send out the request to a lending library within three working days. The table shows the percentage of requests sent within three working days, month by month, by each library.

	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	SEPT.-APR.
BCM	29.4	56.9	38.0	55.1	77.5	81.1	78.1	79.4	64.8
BCW	71.4	76.9	40.0	100.0	71.4	81.3	83.3	69.2	75.6
SF	76.4	75.3	84.9	92.4	93.6	96.8	92.2	89.6	87.5
VI	85.7	94.2	84.3	86.9	90.8	76.2	80.8	98.0	85.9
DT	100.0	100.0	-	-	-	92.0	57.9	55.6	69.4
BT	67.7	69.7	58.8	73.7	62.8	46.8	80.3	97.4	69.1
CM	-	24.2	93.0	95.9	-	89.2	58.3	85.2	73.7
CP	100.0	100.0	95.7	100.0	98.8	98.7	97.5	100.0	98.1
CR	53.2	23.2	70.5	60.0	82.6	63.5	43.1	72.4	51.6
DGC	100.0	7.1	23.1	0.0	55.6	77.8	74.2	33.3	46.2
DGN	27.3	-	3.2	11.1	81.0	52.1	33.0	45.6	35.8
DGR	73.1	26.5	39.2	60.3	88.6	92.2	88.0	40.0	58.6
DGS	73.5	26.5	22.2	29.4	82.4	77.8	36.7	36.0	42.7
EK	-	-	100.0	100.0	100.0	71.3	38.6	4.2	52.5
FV	21.4	88.1	93.1	82.3	83.6	100.0	91.4	79.3	89.8
MLN	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	81.2	86.5	86.8	95.8	55.1
MLP	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	39.1	-	72.7	100.0	29.5
NC	-	82.2	86.7	93.8	94.3	85.1	78.4	63.5	83.5
NIO	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	75.4	83.3
NLD	-	94.1	95.2	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.4
NLS	-	57.6	72.3	68.8	100.0	84.9	100.0	98.5	87.4
NWK	-	-	100.0	-	100.0	100.0	87.5	28.6	75.0
NWN	-	-	-	-	6.1	-	-	-	6.1
NWP	-	-	100.0	100.0	-	100.0	100.0	-	100.0
NWQ	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	-	-	100.0
NWS	100.0	100.0	100.0	-	-	100.0	-	-	100.0
NWT	100.0	97.0	75.0	60.0	25.0	89.6	79.3	34.5	67.3
NWU	100.0	100.0	-	-	-	33.3	-	-	33.3
OKK	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	95.2	98.7	100.0	100.0	98.9
OKP	-	-	-	83.3	-	100.0	40.0	100.0	84.6
OKS	-	-	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	66.7	40.0	68.4
OKV	100.0	100.0	68.0	77.8	50.0	50.0	87.5	100.0	77.9
SL	72.2	81.2	73.1	81.0	85.6	86.7	68.1	60.8	78.7
VCK	-	77.0	86.0	69.2	86.4	88.9	80.0	63.5	77.3
VCL	100.0	89.3	85.0	82.8	87.4	79.6	78.7	80.8	83.4
VCV	-	-	-	0.0	-	63.6	100.0	-	66.7

It has been learned that the performance of some libraries was not so poor as this table indicates. Two circumstances militated against efficiency at some institutions. First, in some cases the telex was not under the control of a library but of another campus department; these departments, some of which were at a distance from the library, did not always give priority to library messages. Second, those colleges with branch campuses were handicapped because a single telex was installed for the college library, in the headquarters library. Requests from a branch campus were phoned in, mailed or delivered by courier, processes which added days to the turnaround time.

It should also be noted that some college libraries did not have enough staff hours available to be able to deal with patrons' requests as quickly as they would have wished. The handling of interlibrary loan requests usually requires special staff attention. Students would have to be shown how to use the COM catalogues, or a staff member would have to interpret the students' requests in using the COM catalogues. The necessary records had to be made. While the college libraries appreciated the interlibrary loan network, some found that it imposed an additional workload which could not always be accommodated.

Turnaround Time: Lending Library's Response to Borrowing Library's Request

This next table is also expressed as a score, showing the percentage of transactions which were either filled or reported upon by the lending libraries within three working days.

Table 12

	BC	SF	VI	DT
SEPT.	96.8%	54.1%	86.1%	100.0%
OCT.	97.3%	49.5%	95.1%	100.0%
NOV.	97.7%	65.2%	89.2%	100.0%
DEC.	95.7%	86.9%	91.8%	100.0%
JAN.	92.8%	92.0%	84.0%	100.0%
FEB.	92.5%	57.5%	73.6%	94.8%
MAR.	94.9%	54.6%	73.9%	-
APR.	97.2%	53.5%	83.1%	-
SEPT. - APR.	95.3%	62.8%	80.5%	97.9%

That BC should have been able to achieve an average of 95.3% over the September-April period may be attributed to experienced employees whose time was totally committed to the filling of loans for the network borrowers. That staff could be fully committed is attributable in turn to the volume of requests handled by BC. At SF and VI, the volume of requests did not require the full time attention of a staff member; thus the staff members at SF and VI fitted network lending into other routines. In the case of SF, a heavy borrower, staff time may have been committed as a priority to borrowing rather than lending routines, as suggested by Table 11: in dealing with its own patrons' requests, SF achieved a high score. SF also suffered some staffing problems arising out of turnover and new appointments.

Table 11 dealt with the time a borrowing library took to process and relay a request from a patron. Table 12 dealt with the time the lending library took to respond to a request. Both these tables were calculated in terms of working days. Table 13 is calculated in calendar days, and deals with the time that elapsed between the actual transmission of a request by a borrowing library to the receipt of the desired item or of a report by that same borrowing library. The table has been broken down by region. The percentage represents a score, this time showing the percentage of reports or items received within seven calendar days of the transmission of the initial request.

Lower Mainland. Being geographically close to BC and SF, libraries in the lower mainland enjoyed the best total turnaround time. Those libraries which were linked directly by courier to BC had the best experience. FV, the most distant of the borrowing libraries from BC and SF, did not fare as well, probably because of infrequent pick-up of materials at the GVLF drop; the mails might have been a better alternative.

Turnaround Time: From Request to Receipt by Borrowing Libraries (Table 13)

Lower Mainland

	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	SEPT.-APR.
BCM	58.8	68.4	76.0	91.0	65.7	72.6	52.5	63.9	70.0
BCW	100.0	53.9	80.0	66.7	85.7	81.3	50.0	69.2	69.5
SF	96.0	93.3	94.1	90.4	95.9	88.8	91.2	94.2	92.7
BT	85.3	81.1	91.2	91.7	84.2	73.7	82.1	92.3	84.7
DGC	0.0	85.6	100.0	100.0	55.6	77.8	90.3	93.3	83.8
DGN	81.8	93.2	90.3	77.8	81.0	83.1	96.4	80.9	91.0
DGR	46.2	82.0	95.0	88.9	34.3	88.2	83.0	83.3	81.8
DGS	91.2	81.3	79.5	82.4	82.3	82.2	96.2	90.7	85.5
CP	100.0	99.9	84.9	100.0	87.1	87.2	79.8	97.1	86.3
FV	14.3	49.0	66.9	43.6	96.0	41.3	63.3	79.3	58.8
VCK	-	69.3	84.0	89.8	63.7	51.9	86.7	84.6	76.4
VCL	93.7	91.8	92.1	84.8	88.4	88.1	80.3	82.2	87.6
VCV	-	-	-	100.0	-	90.0	80.0	-	88.9

Vancouver Island

VI	96.4	87.2	88.3	87.6	84.5	73.1	63.0	66.9	78.9
CM	-	53.9	93.1	91.7	-	80.4	66.7	76.5	77.0
MLN	100.0	64.7	70.1	93.3	88.2	74.2	75.7	70.8	75.7
MLP	-	100.0	75.0	89.5	69.6	-	72.7	45.5	75.8
NIO	-	-	-	-	-	-	17.4	62.5	55.9

Interior

DT	0.0	100.0	-	-	-	76.0	84.2	61.1	76.5
EK	-	-	36.4	0.0	90.0	41.7	27.2	10.4	33.1
OKK	93.3	88.4	65.5	94.4	86.7	69.3	82.7	64.7	78.6
OKP	-	-	-	83.3	-	-	60.0	35.7	53.9
OKS	-	-	100.0	0.0	66.7	100.0	33.3	60.0	63.2
OKV	100.0	100.0	56.0	70.4	100.0	33.3	79.2	66.7	67.4
SL	72.2	89.7	88.5	42.9	92.8	74.2	76.9	74.5	79.2

North

	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	SEPT.-APR.
NLD	-	76.5	61.9	66.7	64.4	82.9	69.1	87.9	73.0
NLS	-	36.3	72.4	87.5	94.1	70.9	59.0	92.3	72.0
NWK	-	-	0.0	-	100.0	100.0	87.5	42.9	75.0
NWN	-	-	-	-	100.0	-	-	-	100.0
NWP	-	-	100.0	0.0	-	100.0	100.0	-	88.9
NWQ	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	-	-	100.0
NWS	100.0	72.6	86.7	-	-	100.0	-	-	87.5
NWT	66.7	81.8	70.8	40.0	96.3	76.1	64.1	55.2	74.1
NWU	-	-	-	-	-	100.0	-	-	100.0

Cariboo

CR	87.5	99.8	100.0	100.0	99.3	96.8	90.9	82.8	96.3
NC	100.0	57.1	63.3	71.9	37.5	45.9	18.2	85.7	50.8

Vancouver Island. VI received most of its materials from BC, whereas the other Island borrowers sent most of their requests to VI. Except in the case of CM, mail was the means of delivery. NI was a late participant, did not have the advantage of a telex, and did not follow standard procedures, with the result that their requests were slow in being filled.

Interior. Of the interior libraries, the farthest distant benefitted least, partly because a telex was not installed. Libraries at Kelowna and Castlegar experienced reasonably high rates, considering that mail was the medium of delivery. Libraries in other communities fared less well.

North. Considering the distance of these libraries from the lending libraries in the south, and that mail was the medium of delivery, turnaround time was quite good.

Cariboo. One possible explanation of the great difference in the experience of CR and NC is that the telex at NC was not within the library's jurisdiction.

The next table compares the speed of mail delivery of items with that of courier delivery. A cumulative percentage is given, representing the proportion of items received by borrowing libraries within periods of days, for both means of delivery.

Table 14

	MAIL	COURIER
1 day	6.6%	8.9%
2 days	11.7%	26.2%
3 days	20.1%	40.7%
4 days	31.8%	53.0%
5 days	42.8%	66.8%
6 days	56.9%	76.0%
7 days	72.4%	87.2%
8 days	79.5%	91.4%
9 days	84.0%	93.3%
10 days	87.9%	94.5%
11 days	91.1%	95.2%
12 days	93.4%	96.3%
13 days	95.1%	97.3%
14 days or more	100.0%	100.0%

Of course other factors come into play when the total efficiency of the interlibrary lending system is considered. However, this table does suggest that the use of a courier is advantageous, resulting in the delivery of more items sooner.

During the initial period of operation, turnaround times were generally satisfactory; in fact, these times were about half of what they had been before the network was established. Turnaround times could be improved by the installation of telexes at all campuses, by changes in the jurisdiction of telexes at some campuses, by improvements in working procedures at participating libraries, and by the establishment of a province-wide courier system. If an average turnaround time of 80% in five working days could be achieved, the network could be said to be highly efficient.

V. Costs

In their 1975 study Interlibrary Loan in Canada: A Report of a Survey, B. Stuart-Stubbs, M. Friesen and D. McInnes analyzed cost data supplied by one hundred and eighty two libraries of all types, and estimated that in 1973 the average cost of a completed interlibrary loan transaction was about $6.50. Higher wages and other operating costs raised this figure within two years to an estimated $8.00, the amount BC decided to charge when it implemented a fee in February 1976.

It was hoped that the network project would realize a lower average transaction cost, and it did. The average cost was around $4.70.

However, there were difficulties in arriving at an absolutely accurate average cost figure.

In accounting for costs, it was decided that the following kinds of expenditures would be taken into consideration: staff salaries and benefits; photocopying; delivery. Not included were the costs of telex transmission, which were too complex to isolate, or any kinds of overheads.

To simplify accounting, the lending libraries agreed that photocopying charges would be standardized at $.05 per exposure. Through sampling it was determined that the cost of wrapping and mailing the average book was $.86 and the average cost of mailing photocopy in an envelope, first class, was $.37. Expenses for courier service were estimated at $.25 per book and $.12 per photocopy.

Expenditures on salaries were easy to identify at BC, because the network staff were committed full-time. But at SF and VI this was not the case, and estimates had to be made of the amount of time individual staff members spent on network activities as opposed to other interlibrary loan activities; since staff might be handling several transactions at once for the sake of efficiency, it was difficult to keep track of costs. For that reason cost figures provided by SF and VI are less reliable than those supplied by BC. Further, those former universities used more professional time on network activities, simply because volume did not make it possible to hire and train a committed network staff; professional librarians would find themselves pressed into the performance of clerical routines which should have been delegated to less senior staff members.

To complicate estimates further, the completion of the transaction forms needed for statistical purposes was not always thorough enough to permit exact analysis. Specifically, records for some eight hundred and eleven filled transactions were incomplete. For purposes of estimating costs, these had to be disregarded.

The following table provides the best available estimate of average transaction costs for the period from September 1977 to April 1978.

Table 15

	U.B.C.	S.F.U.	U.V.	TOTAL
1. Staff	(UBC) 11,558.14 (SFU) 19,048.61 $30,606.75	$10,930.89	$ 6,628.55	$48,166.19
2. Photocopying ($.05/page)	$ 2,241.05	$ 349.45	$ 268.85	$ 2,859.35
3. Mail				
Books ($.86/book)	911.60	297.56	664.78	1,873.94
Copies ($.37/book)	870.24	165.02	223.11	1,258.37
	$ 1,781.84	$ 462.58	$ 887.89	$ 3,132.31

Table 15 cont'd

	U.B.C.	S.F.U.	U.V.	TOTAL
4. Courier				
Books ($.25/book)	368.00	27.00	17.25	412.25
Copies ($.12/copy)	449.32	11.52	12.72	473.56
	$ 817.32	$ 38.52	$ 29.97	$ 885.81
5. Totals	$35,446.96	$11,781.44	$ 7,815.26	$55,043.66
6. Number of complete Transactions	8,687	1,518	1,556	11,761
7. Unit Cost (5. ÷ 6.)	$4.08	$7.76	$5.02	$4.68

As was expected, there were monthly fluctuations in average costs, reflecting principally the volume of transactions. There do seem to be economies of scale.

Table 16

	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A
BC	$ 8.23	$ 3.24	$ 3.61	$ 6.67	$ 4.41	$ 3.14	$ 3.24	$ 5.14
SF	$17.18	$ 6.87	$ 6.64	$12.32	$10.39	$ 7.09	$ 6.64	$ 5.40
VI	$ 5.88	$ 8.23	$ 7.63	$ 6.76	$ 5.79	$ 3.73	$ 4.22	$ 3.92
Average	$ 8.78	$ 4.02	$ 4.46	$ 7.50	$ 5.25	$ 3.68	$ 3.81	$ 4.98

It is unlikely that these costs can be much improved upon. Greater volume at SF and VI, leading to full-time committed staff, might lower costs. However, wages continue to rise annually, and postal rates for library books have just been markedly increased. Average transaction costs will go up, inevitably. But the cost of library books and journals is rising also, so it will continue to be less expensive to borrow some items than to purchase them. In the best interests of the library patrons, the items which are borrowed should be ones which are infrequently required; books and journals which are in regular demand should be on a library's shelves.

VI. Discussion and Proposals

This project of limited duration was also one with a limited scope: it dealt only with the supplying of library materials at the universities to the colleges and universities for the use of college and university students and faculty, and it aimed at making that process more efficient and less expensive. In these things, it succeeded.

However, university-to-college interlibrary loan is but one of the means by which a post-secondary student obtains access to the materials he needs for purposes of course completion or that an instructor uses to obtain materials for research and teaching.

The following pages will deal with the broader aspects of access to libraries, and will include proposals for further improving that access, with a view to maximizing the usefulness of existing library resources on behalf of all students and faculty at post-secondary institutions.

Users and Libraries

For purposes of clarifying future discussion, it is necessary to make some simple distinctions.

The users of post-secondary educational libraries can be categorized as either intramural or extramural users. In the former group are the institution's own students, faculty and staff. In the latter group are those who have no immediate affiliation with the institution, but who may have obtained library privileges through one avenue or another. Among an

institution's extramural users are the students and faculty of another institution.

The users of libraries obtain items by borrowing them from the collection at hand or from another collection, through interlibrary loan.

In general, a library at an institution has an obligation to provide both a direct lending service and interlibrary loan service to its intramural users. Although library regulations may provide the same or more limited privileges to extramural users, it is felt that these users are indeed "extra", and represent an additional and not necessarily welcome service load. This feeling arises in situations where a college is in the same locality as a university and the college's students wish to have direct access to the university's collections and services; and where the students enrolled in the distance education courses of one institution wish to have direct access to the collections at another institution, and moreover to interlibrary loan services.

Cost Elements in Lending

From this, it follows that in connection with post-secondary libraries and their intramural and extramural users, there are these possible activities:

A. Direct lending from On-Site Collections
    1. To Intramural Users
    2. To Extramural Users
B. Interlibrary Borrowing
    1. On Behalf of Intramural Users
    2. On Behalf of Extramural Users

C. Interlibrary Lending

1. To Another Library on Behalf of Its Intramural Users

2. To Another Library on Behalf of Its Extramural Users

In the case of this Project, only the costs of Activity C.I. were under consideration. However, each of these activities involves operating expenditures of a library, mainly for staff.

Activity A, direct lending, involves at a minimum the following routines:

- making a loan record
- storing a loan record
- deleting a loan record
- reshelving an item

In addition, Activity A can require retrieving an item from the collection, photocopying, performing overdue routines, renewing items on loan, searching for missing items, etc.

Activity B, Interlibrary Borrowing, involves at a minimum the following routines:

- receiving a request from a user
- verifying the citation
- searching COM fiche for a location
- transmitting a request
- storing a record of the transaction
- receiving and unpacking the item
- notifying the requestor of its arrival
- lending the item to the requestor
- making a loan record

- receiving the item from the requestor
- deleting the loan record
- repacking the item (unless a photocopy)
- deleting the interlibrary loan record
- mailing/shipping the item

Activity C, Interlibrary lending, involves at a minimum the following routines:

- receive request form
- complete bibliographical verification if necessary
- search catalogue for call number if not provided
- retrieve item
- in about half the cases, photocopy item
- create loan record
- package item
- mail item
- receive and unwrap item
- clear loan record
- reshelve

Allocating Costs

In continuing its support of borrowing by the colleges from the universities, the Ministry of Education preferred fiscal arrangements that attached all the costs associated with a library's support of its own students and faculty to that library. Accepting this principle, it seems reasonable that a given institution and its library should be prepared to budget and pay for the following:

A. 1. Direct loans to Intramural Users

B. 1. Interlibrary Borrowing on Behalf of Intramural Users

C. 2. Interlibrary Lending to another library on Behalf of an Extramural User, if that user is one of its own students-at-a-distance.

Contrariwise, an institution and its library, in serving the needs of students and faculty from other institutions, should receive compensation for:

A. 2. Direct Lending to Extramural Users who are students or faculty from another institution.

B. 2. Interlibrary Borrowing on Behalf of Extramural Users, as above.

C. 1. Interlibrary Lending to other Libraries on Behalf of their Intramural Users.

C. 2. Interlibrary Lending to other Libraries on Behalf of their Extramural Users, unless those users are its own students at a distance.

The effects of implementing a cost-allocation scheme as outlined would be that:

- Service costs associated with an institution's students and faculty would be attached to that institution, and would become part of its planning and budgeting procedures;
- There would be an incentive to extend access to collections to extramural students;
- A library's costs of providing interlibrary loan service to intramural students would be offset by its direct and interlibrary loans to extramural students;
- The option of "to buy" or "to borrow" could be weighed in a real-cost environment.
- Most of the requirements of the students at-a-distance of the universities and colleges and of the Open Learning Institute could

be met without the necessity of making special and unique library-to-library arrangements.

The implementation of this scheme would require:

- Agreement of the participating post-secondary teaching institutions and/or their libraries.
- Collection of direct and interlibrary loan statistics at all post-secondary libraries, in a uniform way.
- Submission of those statistics to a central agency on a regular basis.
- Estimation of costs of the separate routines for direct lending, interlibrary lending and interlibrary borrowing, and agreement upon a common scale of fees.
- Application of fees to statistics by the central agency, to arrive at an account for each library, some of which would be in a credit position, and some of which would be in a debit position.
- Payment of charges by libraries in a debit position to the central agency.
- From this revenue, payments by the central agency to libraries in a credit position.

Although statistics could be submitted to the central agency on a monthly basis, payments could be made on an annual basis, say in terms of a calendar year; this would allow three months from January to March to complete financial transactions within the fiscal year.

It would be essential, however, for the administrations of each institution to make a budget advance to the libraries to allow them to employ service

personnel, on the understanding that this advance would be repaid from revenue. It should be noted that direct and interlibrary loan activity fluctuates during the academic year at most institutions, so it would be likely that part-time or hourly staff would be hired as necessary.

At present the Ministry of Education has agreed to underwrite the costs of interlibrary borrowing by the colleges only, in the interests of improving standards of library service to college students and faculty. It is hoped that the Ministry will be willing, under this proposed plan, to rebate those libraries which are in a debit position, in effect to assist those students whose institution's library is either not accessible to them directly, or is inadequate in terms of their specific requirements for information, requiring them to acquire materials by direct or interlibrary borrowing.

The Union Catalogue

The British Columbia Union Catalogue is in its early stages of development. Virtually all items now being acquired by post-secondary libraries are being entered into the machine-readable data base which is used to produce both the union catalogue and individual library catalogues. Retrospective conversion of existing card catalogue is also in progress, and will take years to complete. But when this enormous and unprecedented task is completed, it will be possible for anyone anywhere in the province to learn what items are held in the totality of the libraries' collections, and where they are located.

At the present time, interlibrary loans in the majority flow from the

universities to the colleges. As the contents of all collections become known, it is expected that there will be more loans between colleges, and from the colleges to the universities. But although the percentage of total loans filled by the universities may decrease, it is not likely that the number will decline. The very size of the university collections dictates that they will remain a major provincial resource.

The Methodology of Interlibrary Lending

Consistent use of the Manual produced for this project has already transformed the methodology of interlibrary lending in ways which have accelerated the filling of transactions while lowering unit costs. Experience with these routines over the year resulted in modifications and refinements as required. No major changes in routines are proposed.

The question has been asked: would it be more efficient to formalize the routing of requests, so that some institutions would address all requests to one or another source library first, with that library re-routing those requests it could not fill? The findings and experience of this project suggest the negative. The "free market" approach allows the borrowing library to select its own source, taking into account a variety of factors, and to keep better track of its own requests. On the other hand, to involve the lending libraries in re-routing requests would probably raise operating costs and increase turnaround times.

Communications

Telex has proved to be an efficient means of transmitting messages. However,

there is room for improvement.

In some institutions the telex machine has not been located in the library, or under its jurisdiction. This has resulted in delays in transmitting requests on behalf of library patrons.

Another source of delay occurs in the case of those colleges with branch campuses or teaching centres, where the institution has a single telex. The branch library must phone the request to the central library, or wherever the telex is located. It may be that at present levels of use it is not possible to justify the cost of a telex at every teaching centre, but this being the case it should be noted that slower service to those centres may be inevitable.

Delivery

Although mail service proved to be faster than expected, though sometimes erratic and even non-existent, and although the variety of courier arrangements made by lower Mainland institutions worked to their individual advantages, delivery remains an area calling out for improvement. If there were a central agency responsible for a courier system, it would be possible to develop a system for the lower Mainland which would be more cost-efficient than the present one, where several institutions are spending money to perform the same routines.

Delivery times from the Lower Mainland to interior locations, between the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island, and on Vancouver Island could be reduced with couriers. A cost-study carried out by the Provincial Education

Media Centre indicated that a dedicated courier system would be extremely expensive. Simon Fraser University Library, in its SHARE programme, employed a commercial courier to deliver materials one way from Burnaby to Kelowna. The potential of using this principle, and its costs, could be explored in the case of the situations mentioned above.

To deal with the question of delivery, it is proposed that a thorough study be carried out by persons acquainted with the design and cost-accounting of transportation systems. It may be possible to have such a study conducted, at little or no cost, through U.B.C.'s Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration.

Related and Unresolved Issues

Libraries being integrated organizations, one aspect of their activity inevitably impinges on another. There are some issues which, while not within the scope of this project, need attention.

One of these issues is the general question of reference service to extramural students. This is an increasing problem for those college libraries which are being used by university students-at-a-distance. Such students want more than direct and interlibrary borrowing privileges.

They want assistance in using the library, in searching through its catalogue, its collection of indexes, abstracts, and reference books, and in having questions answered, all in relation to course assignments. College libraries are not so well staffed that they can always handle these additional users. Nor do they have all the necessary reference sources and indexes at hand.

What the dimensions of this problem are, and how it can be resolved are not known. It is proposed that these matters be addressed by the Council of B.C. Post-Secondary Library Directors and by the Education Library Advisory Committee.

Related again to the extramural students-at-at-distance is the question of specialized collections. These students are often enrolled in courses of an advanced and specific nature. The college collections do not contain the necessary materials, nor should they, because the enrollees may be few in number and the course may not be offerred in succeeding years. Inter-library loan is not an answer because the material needed by the student is in demand at the home university, and in any case the student needs access to a collection of material, not just a few items. The universities have tried to deal with this problem in a number of ways: by sending a class collection directly to the instructor, by placing loan collections in college libraries, or by giving the necessary materials to colleges. Although the Education Library Advisory Committee confronted this issue in Ronald Welwood's paper entitled Interior Education Resources Network (INTERN) - July 1977, further study is necessary, made all the more pressing by the advent of the Open Learning Institute. It should also be noted that the university libraries frequently have their difficulties in obtaining reading lists from faculty members offering these courses at-a-distance, or obtaining them with sufficient lead time to be able to use them. Unfortunately, there are some faculty members who are either unaware or unwilling to concede that their courses imply literature support, and who are prepared to let the local libraries bear the brunt of the students' frustration.

This leads to another unresolved issue, and a very large one. What is the

role of the public library in serving the special needs of students, and in particular students-at-a-distance? To say that a student is simply a member of the public, and within the service mandate of the public library, overlooks the fact that public library collections and services are not tailored to the needs of education, with the possible exception of the largest libraries in urban centres. At the same time, users of public libraries who are not students sometimes need access to materials uniquely held by libraries at post-secondary institutions. There is a need to establish new kinds of relationships between libraries in the public and education sectors. In this, librarians need the assistance of governments, because from their level they are unable to resolve complex matters relating to administration and finance. Responsibility for these two groups of libraries lies in separate departments within the provincial government. Collaboration between the relevant ministries is necessary in the interest of students and all citizens.

Recent revisions to legislation make the appointment of a new public library advisory board imminent. It is proposed that this group, with Ministry officials, meet with the Education Library Advisory Committee or its successor, and Ministry of Education officials, to at least explore this issue.